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C O N F I D E N T I A L KUWAIT 003563

SIPDIS

STATE FOR NEA, NEA/ARP, NEA/NGA, NEA/IPA

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SUBJECT: (C) ORAL MESSAGE FROM SECRETARY TO ARAB LEAGUE  
FOREIGN MINISTERS DELIVERED

REF: STATE 224109

Classified By: AMB. RICHARD H. JONES; REASONS 1.5 (B, D).

1. (U) Action Request - see paragraph 4.

2. (C) Pol Chief delivered reftel oral message to Shaykh Dr. Ahmed Nasser Mohammed al-Sabah, the Foreign Minister's Office Director, August 4. Shaykh Ahmed replied that Kuwait and all other GCC states endorse the Iraqi Governing Council (IGC) and support Palestinian Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen). However, before giving money to the Palestinian Authority, the GOK wants assurances that Israel will not seize or freeze such funds, and that it will move swiftly and predictably to release PA funds already seized/frozen.

3. (C) Anticipating that Abu Mazen will visit Kuwait within the next two weeks, he asked that the USG impress upon him that his visit will go much better if he speaks out against Saddam's regime and the mass graves before he gets here, as well as in the joint communique the GOK is preparing. In fact, Shaykh Ahmed added, Abu Mazen's relations with Kuwait will go better "the more he distances himself from Arafat." He stressed that Kuwaitis still feel betrayed by the Palestinians who supported Saddam during the Iraqi occupation after "living among us" for so long. (NOTE: it is becoming painfully clear to Kuwaitis that their fellow-citizens missing since the Iraqi occupation are buried somewhere in those mass graves; there are about 600 missing Kuwaitis, a huge number for this small population, proportionally equivalent to about 180,000 missing Americans. END NOTE.)

4. (C) ACTION REQUEST: We request that the State Department ensure that Abu Mazen is aware of the GOK's sentiments before he visits here.

5. (C) Shaykh Ahmed stated that Kuwait will not participate in the August 5-6 meeting of the Arab League Sharm el-Sheikh Summit "Follow Up and Steering Committee," as it is not a member of the Committee. Regarding the Arab League itself, he said Kuwait will present a reform proposal in September, intended to move away from "the empty slogans of the last fifty years" towards a more meaningful, constructive role. He said the GOK is pressing Egypt to rein in Arab League SecGen Amr Musa, who behaved "unacceptably" by meeting with "some of the most extremist factions in Iraq" while refusing to meet with the IGC.

JONES